



ONTARIO PUBLIC  
SCHOOL BOARDS'  
ASSOCIATION

Leading Education's Advocates

## EFFECTIVE PRACTICES IN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

(For the purposes of this survey alternative education is defined as any program/approach that supports students who are not successfully engaged in school and require an alternate delivery model)

**School Board:** Algoma District School Board

**Contact Person and Email Address:** Michael McCabe (mccabem@adsb.on.ca)

**Name of Program/Initiative/Strategy:** Algoma Education Connection

**Hyperlinks to Documents or Website(s) Describing this Program/Initiative/Strategy:**

<http://www.adsb.on.ca/programs/Site%20Assets/SitePages/Secondary/CCalendar%2018-19v3%20January%2016th.pdf> (pages 19-20)

### Description of Program/Initiative/Strategy

The focus is on programs/initiatives/strategies that increase student engagement, confidence, achievement and well-being. In the brief description please provide answers to the following questions: Where the program/initiative/strategy is delivered (school/board locations)? Who is responsible for delivering and monitoring the program/initiative/strategy? Who is the target audience? Are there any community partnerships involved? Are there any staffing or budget implications? Are there any special resources required? What are your indicators of success, etc.?

The Algoma Education Connection is a multi-site program that includes the Kina Awiiya Secondary Program, Prince Charles Alternative School, and the School College Connection Program. These programs each have distinct features, including alternative schedules, small classes, individualized academic programming, work experience, culturally focused programming and the opportunity to take dual credits. The programs share a focus on flexibility, continuous intake, and individualized programming to offer students an educational experience that reflect students own experiences and circumstances, in an environment that is uniquely different from the traditional classroom setting.

Two secondary principals share administrative responsibilities for the Algoma Education Connection alternative programs. The Sault College Connection Program, located in Sault College, has one classroom teacher whereas the other two programs have five and six teachers respectively. Kina Awiiya and Prince Charles also share a SERT and Coop teacher. The Kina Awiiya Secondary Program is a partnership between the Algoma District School Board and the Sault Ste. Marie Indian Friendship Centre. Students attending Kina Awiiya are

able to access programming available through the Indian Friendship Centre such as Healthy Children-Healthy Babies, Career Life Planning, Addictions support, Family Support, Cultural Resources, Well Being, and Homelessness, to name a few. All three AEC programs have access to a school and attendance counsellor, though in actuality, there is always a need for additional support of this role.

**What has been the impact on Student Learning?**

As mentioned above, without the Algoma Education Connection, literally thousands of students over the last 15 years would never have earned a secondary school diploma, or ever have pictured themselves doing so. Ninety-five percent of the students attending our alternative programs have transitioned to the AEC because they were unable to find success within the structure and demands of a composite school. AEC's two most significant impacts on student learning have been a steadily increasing graduation rate (though each graduation is an accomplishment), and the circle of care and emphasis on student well-being that is evident at each of the three sites. While well-being is difficult to quantify in terms of impact on student learning, indicators such as regular attendance, increased self-esteem, and participation within the school community have increasingly seen growth.